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# Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 52 of Security Council resolution 2348 (2017). It covers major developments that have occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since my report of 10 March 2017 (S/2017/206). The report describes progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and provides an overview of political developments since my report on the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016 in that country (S/2017/435) of 17 May.

## II. Major developments

### A. Political situation

2. During the reporting period, the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016 was slow, incomplete and marked persistently by disagreements between the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales de la République démocratique du Congo acquises au changement, an opposition platform, and the Majorité présidentielle over whether developments were in line with the letter and spirit of the agreement.

3. On 16 May 2017, five months after the signing of the agreement and five weeks after the appointment of a new Prime Minister, a 59-member transitional Government was sworn in before the National Assembly. This followed the signing, in late April, of the Arrangements particuliers for the implementation of the agreement by most political actors, with the exception of the Rassemblement. In his address at the swearing-in ceremony, the Prime Minister, Bruno Tshibala, stated that his Government would focus on organizing credible, free, transparent and peaceful elections by the end of the year, as envisaged under the Agreement; addressing the economic crisis; improving socioeconomic conditions; and restoring peace across the country. He also announced that his Government would consider options for reducing the cost of elections, possibly by modifying voting modalities.

4. The Rassemblement denounced the formation and inauguration of the new Government as constituting an infringement of the agreement. The Secretary-



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General of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS), Jean-Marc Kabund-a-Kabund, and the President of the Rassemblement, Félix Tshisekedi, who have long insisted that the agreement stipulates that the new Prime Minister should have been a member of the Rassemblement, called upon all Congolese to remain mobilized in support of the full implementation of the accord.

5. On 20 May, at an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila, noting that the swift organization of elections is the first objective of the Government, instructed the new cabinet to provide support to the Independent National Electoral Commission. He stressed the need to consolidate peace and security throughout the country as a prerequisite for credible elections. Mr. Kabila also urged the Government to work towards improving the socioeconomic conditions of the Congolese people, and to act swiftly in regard to presenting a draft 2017 budget for adoption by the parliament.

6. By mid-June, the conseil national de suivi de l'accord, an oversight mechanism for the implementation of the agreement, had yet to be established. No significant progress was noted in the implementation of the confidence-building measures foreseen in the agreement. Meanwhile, plans to repatriate and bury the remains of Étienne Tshisekedi, the former leader of UDPS who had passed away on 1 February, remained at an impasse, as disagreement persisted between the party and the Government on various modalities, fuelling tense stand-offs between security services and supporters of UDPS at the headquarters of the party in Kinshasa during the month of April.

7. On 30 April, the voter registration process was completed in 13 provinces and launched in 10 others; and on 28 May, the process was launched in Kinshasa. In the two remaining provinces, Kasaï and Kasaï Central, registration has not yet commenced owing to insecurity. Registration of the members of the Congolese diaspora has also not yet commenced. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission, as of 21 June, over 28 million potential voters had been registered, representing 69.3 per cent of the estimated electorate nationwide, in which the proportion of women is 48 per cent.

8. While the Independent National Electoral Commission maintains 31 July as the official deadline for the completion of the voter registration process, a measure of uncertainty persists, including as a result of the insecurity in Kasaï and Kasaï Central provinces. Also, the Government faces an increasingly difficult budgetary situation. This affects its ability to fund the electoral process, which the Commission estimates would cost $1.3 billion. The multi-partner basket support fund for the Projet d'appui au cycle électoral au Congo, which is managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), remains funded at the level of only 6 per cent of the required amount of $123.3 million, owing partly to donor concerns regarding uncertainties surrounding the political transition.

**Regional and other developments**

9. At the regional level, from 19 to 21 April, the ministerial-level troika of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, Augustine Mahiga, conducted a series of consultations in Kinshasa with Mr. Kabila, members of the Government, representatives of the Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, political and civil society stakeholders, and officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission. The troika affirmed its continuing commitment to working with the United Nations, the African Union, the International Organization

of la Francophonie and other partners in the search for sustainable solutions to the current political crisis, including with respect to its security-related ramifications.

10. On 12 May, the Government of Angola called upon all Congolese actors to "immediately cease violence, acts of extremism and political intolerance", citing the continued influx of Congolese refugees from the Kasaï provinces into the northern provinces of Angola. That country's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Manuel Domingos Augusto, met with Mr. Kabila in Kinshasa on 15 April. That visit was followed by the visit to Luanda on 19 May of the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Léonard She Okitundu, to discuss, with his Angolan counterparts, options for addressing the presence of Congolese refugees and other bilateral issues.

11. From 28 to 31 May, a delegation of the guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, representing the United Nations, the African Union, SADC and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where they exchanged views with Mr. Kabila and leaders of the Majorité présidentielle as well as members of various opposition parties, including Félix Tshisekedi, President of the Rassemblement, in an attempt to narrow differences and catalyse progress on the implementation of the agreement.

12. On 29 May, the European Council adopted restrictive measures directed against nine individuals who hold positions of responsibility, mostly in the State administration and in the security forces, for contributing to serious human rights violations and for undermining a consensual and peaceful solution to issues associated with the holding of elections. Those measures include a ban on entering the European Union and an asset freeze. On 1 June, the United States Department of the Treasury sanctioned the head of the Maison militaire under Mr. Kabila for his alleged role in activities that threaten the peace, security and stability.

13. During the reporting period, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo continued its diplomatic efforts to broaden support across the region, which resulted in emission of generally positive signals from countries of the region vis-à-vis steps taken by Mr. Kabila. These efforts included State visits to Egypt and Gabon of Mr. Kabila, as well as visits and engagement of the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration with the Presidents of Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. The Vice-Prime Minister also met in Addis Ababa with the Chair of the African Union Commission, who urged the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take concrete steps towards the implementation of the 31 December 2016 agreement.

14. My Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Maman Sambo Sidikou, has continued to work closely with national stakeholders, regional actors (in conjunction with my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region), Saïd Djinnit, and other key international partners in support of the implementation of the agreement. He also continued to engage with political stakeholders, notably the Majorité présidentielle and the Rassemblement, on, inter alia, the important goal of organizing elections by December 2017. He advocated with national authorities for the prompt implementation of confidence-building measures aimed at creating an environment conducive to peaceful, free, fair and credible elections. Similar political engagement efforts were also carried out at the provincial level.

## B. Security situation

15. The major shift observed over the first three months of 2017 across the security landscape of the country persisted during the reporting period, as violence and threats to civilians continued to spread in the west, and instability continued to prevail in the east. In the western Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the three Kasaï provinces, in addition to clashes between the Kamuina Nsapu militia and security forces — which resulted in numerous human rights violations, including targeted killings by the militia as well as summary executions and acts of rape perpetrated by security forces, as described in paragraphs 39-45 and 49 below, there was an increase in violence among ethnic communities. Foreign and Congolese armed groups remained active in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, mostly in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. Insecurity also persisted in the border areas, specifically along the borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with Angola, the Central African Republic and South Sudan. At the same time, MONUSCO has further intensified civilian, military and police efforts to deliver on the mandates of protection of civilians and the neutralization of armed groups. In situations where community alert networks were active, over 85 per cent of protection-of-civilians alerts were responded to by either the Government and/or MONUSCO.

### Western Democratic Republic of the Congo

16. In Kasaï Central, despite a relative improvement of the security situation in Kananga, the provincial capital, and its surrounding areas, violence persisted across the province and spread into neighbouring Kasaï province and towards the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. In both provinces, attacks by Kamuina Nsapu militia groups continued, targeting security forces, public institutions, voter registration centres, religious institutions, community leaders and civilians. Authorities reported that on 24 March, the Kamuina Nsapu militia ambushed a truck belonging to the Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC) and beheaded 39 police officers in Kamuesha, Kasaï province. Between 8 and 15 April, the militia reportedly killed at least 13 customary chiefs in Kamonia territory for refusing to align with the militia; and between 5 and 10 May, killed four more customary chiefs in Kazumba, Luiza, Kasaï Central and Kamonia territory. On 8 June, the militia reportedly killed five civilians who were travelling from Kalala Diboko to Masuika and whose aim was to encourage militia members to demobilize. Also, from 25 to 28 April, in Kazumba territory, the Kamuina Nsapu militia clashed with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC)), which reportedly led to the killing of 41 militia members and 12 soldiers. In the same territory, on 30 April, the attack of the Kamuina Nsapu militia on a truck delivering educational examination materials resulted in the killing of three school inspectors.

17. The ongoing violence has exacerbated intercommunal tensions and divisions. Between 13 and 25 April, in Kamonia territory, Kasaï province, violence between Pende and Tshokwe communities, reportedly aligned with the Government, and Luba and Lulua communities, reportedly associated with the Kamuina Nsapu militia, led to the killing of 38 people, including eight women and eight children. Sporadic incidences of violence have also been reported in four neighbouring provinces, namely, Kasaï Oriental, Sankuru, Lomami and Lualaba.

18. In response to the escalating situation, the Government restructured its military presence in the Kasaï region. This led to substantial reinforcements of the armed forces with troops formally based in North Kivu, which arrived in Kananga on 27 March and had been deployed throughout Kasaï province by 11 April.

Additional FARDC reinforcements from Kinshasa arrived in Kananga on 3 May. Subsequently, MONUSCO received reports of the killing of militia members and civilians during operations by the security forces. Between 28 and 30 March, for example, during operations in the Katoka and Nganza communes of Kananga, 53 civilians and members of the Kamuina Nsapu militia were reportedly killed, including at least 15 women and 14 children. On 15 May, the armed forces announced that since the end of March, 390 militia members and 124 members of the national security forces had been killed during operations in Kasaï and Kasaï Central provinces.

19. On 12 March, Zaida Catalán and Michael Sharp, two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the four Congolese nationals who accompanied them went missing in Kasaï Central province. On 27 March, after a 15-day intensive search-and-rescue operation conducted by MONUSCO, the remains of those two members of the Group of Experts were found in a shallow grave near Bukonde, south of Kananga, the provincial capital. A video of their murder was circulated on social media, allegedly by members of the Kamuina Nsapu militia. On 20 May, at a press conference, authorities stated that the investigation into the killing of the two members of the Group of Experts had been closed and the judicial file transmitted to the military garrison tribunal of Kananga. On 5 June, the trial of 2 of the 16 suspects in the killing began in Kananga. The 14 others, who reportedly remain at large, are being tried in absentia.

20. In Tanganyika province, violence persisted among communities and between armed groups and security forces despite a lull following a peace forum held in Kalemie, the provincial capital, in February. In March and April, nine clashes were reported between Luba and Twa militias, causing population displacements. From 27 to 29 April, Luba and Twa militias in Kalemie territory clashed following allegations that some Twa had conducted raids on crops and cattle of the Luba community. Four people were killed and hundreds of homes were burned near the village of Tabac. Violence erupted in the Bendera area, northern Kalemie territory, between Bafuliro, Banyamulenge and Twa cattle herders. In late March, a woman from the Bafuliro community was allegedly killed by Twa militiamen. This incident sparked retaliatory actions by members of the Bafuliro and Banyamulenge communities, who reportedly killed five Twa civilians, including a local chief. Clashes also took place between militias and national security forces. On 21 April, militia associated with the Twa community ambushed FARDC forces near Kalemie, taking six weapons. On the same day, Twa militias targeted a FARDC position in the village of Kataki, Kalemie territory. In response, authorities arrested four Twa leaders and FARDC reinforced its presence along the Kalemie-Bendera and Kalemie-Nyunzu axes.

21. The security situation in Haut Katanga and Lualaba provinces has to a large extent been calm during the reporting period, despite sporadic incursions of Kamuina Nsapu militia from the south-eastern area of Kasai Central province into Kapanga territory, northern Lualaba province, particularly in March and early April. The incursions triggered ethnic tensions in Lualaba, notably between the local Rund community and those perceived as not being indigenous, including internally displaced persons from the greater Kasaï region. Security-related incidents have decreased in the Mitwaba area, Haut Katanga province, since the surrender in October 2016 of Gédéon Kyungu Mutanga, the leader of the Mayi-Mayi Kata Katanga armed group.

22. In respect of a response by MONUSCO to the deteriorating situation across the Kasaï region during the reporting period, while there has been neither involvement in, nor the provision of support to, operations conducted by FARDC, the Mission did significantly reinforce the presence of its civilian components

across the three Kasaï provinces in order to protect civilians and monitor and report on human rights violations, as well as support the implementation of the agreement, the voter registration process and humanitarian access. In May, MONUSCO deployed 240 troops in three standing combat deployments in Bulungu, Luiza, and Tshimbulu, Kasaï Central. Across the Kasaï provinces, the Force is adjusting its posture and will deploy additional companies in the months ahead to provide assistance to the Mission's civilian components and humanitarian actors. MONUSCO has also expanded community alert networks for these areas and improved early warning mechanisms.

23. The deployment of the standing combat deployment in Tshimbulu has contributed to the return of people displaced as a result of the insecurity of the situation. Over 65 per cent of the population has now returned and all 36 schools and churches have reopened. The Mission has also supported mediation efforts with a view to protecting civilians. On 10 and 11 May, the Mission supported a capacity-building exercise for representatives of the Direction générale des affaires coutumières, a consultative committee newly established to address customary conflicts. Last, MONUSCO evacuated 26 religious figures and 80 children who had been threatened by militias and increased the number of security patrols in areas under threat.

24. The Mission upgraded its antenna in Kananga into a field office, and reinforced its office in Mbuji Mayi, with the deployment of 70 civilian staff and 30 police officers; and it now has one full company in Kananga and three standing combat deployments in Kasaï Central. By the Mission's assessment, these deployments need to be maintained and possibly expanded, since they appear to have an important stabilizing effect, including by containing human rights violations and encouraging the local population to return and schools to open. MONUSCO plans to open an office in Tshikapa, the provincial capital of Kasai province, with an appropriate military deployment to assist in protecting civilians and support local authorities in addressing the growing intercommunal violence.

25. MONUSCO continued to monitor threats against the civilian population in Kinshasa. Between 9 and 11 April, during a period of heightened political tension following the nomination of the new Prime Minister, the Mission enhanced its patrolling of the city. The heightened presence of MONUSCO in the city and its continuing advocacy contributed to the release of 42 civilians arbitrarily arrested by the national police in connection with a march on 10 April planned by the Rassemblement.

**Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo**

26. In North Kivu, the year-old split within the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) continues to contribute to a deterioration of the security environment. On 26 April, fighting between the Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie (CNRD), a splinter faction of FDLR, and Mayi-Mayi Nyatura elements, supported by another faction of the same FDLR known as FDLR/Forces combattantes abacunguzi (FDLR-FOCA), in Kivuye and Bweru villages, resulted in the death of 29 people. Clashes between ethnically based militias also continued, including in Rutshuru territory between Hutu and Nande militias, and between Mayi-Mayi Nyatura and FDLR coalitions against Mayi-Mayi Mazembe, leading to displacements of population. On 12 and 13 April, an attack by the Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain (APCLS), supported by Mayi-Mayi Kifuafua elements, against Forces de défense congolaise (FDC) positions in Ngulu and Lutanda villages resulted in the burning of several houses and the displacement of civilians. The situation around Lake Edward remained volatile as various Mayi-Mayi groups attempted to exert control over the lucrative fishing trade. During the

period from 22 April to 1 May, 50 fishermen were abducted by Mayi Mayi Charles elements. In Masisi territory, the situation remained volatile as well, with the continued activities of ethnically based Congolese armed groups and the ongoing activities of FDLR. On the other hand, the Beni area has seen a sustained period of relative calm, due mainly to the limited activities of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) during the reporting period.

27. In South Kivu, Congolese armed groups continue to pose a security threat, especially in Fizi, Kalehe, Shabunda and Uvira territories. Their involvement in customary succession issues as well as in intercommunal and transhumance-related disputes in Kabare, Kalehe, Fizi, and Uvira territories, has markedly increased. Uvira territory was particularly affected by a rise in intercommunal conflicts and the spillover of the crisis in Burundi. On 9 April, confrontations between members of the Bafuliru and Banyamulenge communities seeking to control a local chieftaincy enflamed tensions in Bijombo, Uvira territory. A growing number of civilians have been displaced to surrounding areas, including Tanganyika and North Kivu. In early May, a Twa delegation from Tanganyika arrived in Fizi territory to warn Bafuliru and Banyamulenge community members against incursions on their lands. MONUSCO received reports of recruitment of Burundi nationals by Congolese armed groups in the area; and in response, in late April, FARDC reinforced its presence near Bijombo.

28. In Ituri, the Forces de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri (FRPI) continued to pose the single greatest security threat to civilians. During the month of May alone, the group was involved in 31 instances of human rights abuses, including one summary execution and six rapes. From 11 to 16 March, MONUSCO and FARDC conducted a coordinated operation against FRPI, resulting in the destruction of three camps. In addition, Djugu and Mahagi territories have seen a rising number of violent disputes and conflicts over land and local power structures. In March, a land dispute in Djugu led to the death of one person and the destruction of 280 houses and two schools. In April, a conflict over customary chieftaincy in Mahagi resulted in the deaths of two people and the burning down of 250 houses. In Mambasa territory, FARDC has continued operations against Mayi-Mayi groups, aimed particularly at dislodging them from gold-mining sites. Instability also persisted along the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, in Ituri province. On 16 March, armed men attacked a FARDC post at Edipi.

29. In Haut-Uélé, attacks by elements of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and reported crossings of armed elements from South Sudan continue to impact the security situation. Within the context of the drawdown of the regional task force conducting the operation against LRA (including, notably, the United States Africa Command and the Ugandan People's Defense Force), isolated splinter groups of LRA have continued attacks and abduction of civilians in remote areas of north-western Haut-Uélé and in the northern part of Bas-Uélé, along the border with the Central African Republic. Attacks by LRA have been aimed primarily at furthering their efforts to poach and obtain supplies by raiding local communities.

30. On 11 June, when the main prison in Beni was attacked by unidentified armed elements, at least 900 prisoners escaped and 11 persons were killed. On 22 June, a series of coordinated attacks aimed at freeing high-profile prisoners in Beni was repelled by FARDC with the support of MONUSCO troops and police. At least nine people were killed as a result. These incidents are part of a series of incidents which started on 17 May when the Makala central prison in Kinshasa was attacked, allegedly by sympathizers of the Bundu Dia Mayala political party. The leader of the party, Ne Muanda Nsemi, escaped along with thousands of prisoners. Other prison breaks have occurred across the country in recent weeks, prompting some members of parliament to call for the resignation of key government ministers.

31. In its efforts to protect civilians and neutralize armed groups, MONUSCO was involved in two coordinated operations with FARDC against FRPI in Ituri, using a combination of framework brigade elements and special forces. The operations resulted in a rise in FRPI surrenders. In Haut-Uélé, from March to June, MONUSCO supported a FARDC operation against LRA. MONUSCO also strengthened the early warning network along the border with South Sudan by facilitating capacity-building workshops and donating solar-powered communication equipment to local protection committees in the most vulnerable areas. In addition, the Mission continued to provide logistical and tactical support to FARDC within the framework of Operation Red Kite, and donated 53 solar-powered kits and 800 water purifiers to enhance the anti-LRA response in very remote areas, in compliance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.

32. In South Kivu and Tanganyika provinces, MONUSCO continued to support efforts to promote peaceful coexistence between communities. From 10 to 12 April, MONUSCO facilitated an interprovincial conference which was held to address conflicts related to transhumance in South Kivu, Maniema and Tanganyika. In North Kivu, between 20 and 27 March, the Mission supported a series of dialogues among local authorities in order to address rising intercommunal tensions between Nande and Hutu communities in Rutshuru territory. The Mission also established a standing combat deployment in Munguli in the period from 21 to 26 May to protect a camp of internally displaced persons within the context of clashes between Mayi-Mayi Mazembe and Mayi-Mayi Nyatura militia.

33. In North Kivu, in collaboration with FARDC, the Mine Action Service of the United Nations supported the destruction of explosive items and ammunition from a recently discovered ammunition cache belonging to the former Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) armed group in Rutshuru territory. This was the fourth M23 ammunition cache found in North Kivu since 2016. Over 6,000 explosive items, including projectiles, mortars and rockets, have been destroyed to date. Response by the Mine Action Service to 43 requests to remove explosive ordnance across the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo resulted in the destruction of 577 weapons and over 7,600 explosive items. Despite these efforts, during the reporting period, 16 people were reportedly killed by explosive remnants of war in North Kivu.

**Disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion, and related activities**

34. From 10 March to 31 May, MONUSCO received 163 male and five female Congolese combatants across the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Fifty-seven per cent were combatants of FDLR and Mayi-Mayi Nyatura, 18 per cent were members of other Mayi-Mayi groups and 16 per cent were members of Raia Mutomboki. The majority of those former combatants opted to enter the Programme national de désarmement, démobilisation et réintégration phase III (PNDDR III). In addition, MONUSCO received and repatriated to Rwanda 79 foreign combatants (78 male and 1 female), the majority from FDLR-FOCA. Most notably, on 12 March, 18 members of FDLR, including the second in command of FDLR Grand-Nord, surrendered with 17 weapons.

35. MONUSCO continued to provide reinsertion support to the PNDDR III camps in Kamina and Kitona where, as of 31 May, 904 male and 13 female former combatants were receiving vocational training. In addition, in the period from 18 to 27 April, MONUSCO supported the transfer of 107 Kata Katanga elements, who had surrendered to the Government in Haut Katanga in 2016, from Lubumbashi to the Kamina camp. MONUSCO also continued to provide support to 297 FDLR elements, including one woman and 1,067 dependants (13 men, 242 women, 415 boys and 397 girls), in the FDLR voluntary disarmament programme camps of

Kanyabayonga and Walungu, as well as to the Government-managed camp in Kisangani. In addition, MONUSCO continued to provide support to 610 elements of the South Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO), including one woman, accommodated by MONUSCO in Dungu and Goma.

**Stabilization**

36. MONUSCO continued to support area-based stabilization efforts under the aegis of the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS), facilitating coordination among the Government, international partners, civil society and the United Nations country team. The Mission supported the launch of five additional stabilization programmes in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, targeting root causes of conflict through in-depth gender-sensitive conflict analyses and mitigation measures, while fostering political engagement through the development of the first compact by the Mission with the provincial government of South Kivu. MONUSCO also continues to advocate for the revision and effective application of the 2005 legal framework for election security, in line with the 31 December 2016 agreement.

**Regional developments**

37. Countries of the region pursued efforts to address political and security challenges, particularly the continued threat posed by armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The seventeenth meeting and retreat of the Technical Support Committee of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo was held in Naivasha, Kenya, on 4 and 5 May 2017. The focus of the retreat was on means for improving the efficiency and performance of the Committee. Recommendations centred on strengthening confidence among countries and ensuring effective follow-up of progress in the delivery of Framework commitments, notably through good offices initiatives by the guarantors, bilateral engagement among regional leaders and enhanced cooperation at the technical level.

38. There was some modest progress in relation to SPLM/A-IO in MONUSCO premises. On 14 April, eight SPLM/A-IO elements in MONUSCO premises voluntarily repatriated to Juba, in the presence of the Vice-Minister of Defence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Ambassador of South Sudan to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, representatives of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism and officials of MONUSCO.

## C. Human rights situation

39. MONUSCO documented the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation, with 1,444 human rights violations committed from March to May, in comparison with 888 violations recorded in January and February. Of those, 287 human rights violations occurred in the three Kasai provinces, Tanganyika, and Kongo Central. Armed groups perpetrated 574 human rights violations, while State agents were responsible for 870, with 23 per cent of violations perpetrated by FARDC and 26 per cent by the national police. At least 437 victims of extrajudicial and arbitrary killings, including 43 women and 67 children, were registered during the period under review. Of those 437 victims, 304, including 27 women and 64 children, were killed by State agents; and 133, including 16 women and three children, by armed groups.

40. The trend towards maintaining a restricted democratic space persisted, with increasing violations of civil and political rights, particularly freedom of peaceful

assembly, of opinion and of expression. Political opponents, civil society activists and journalists were the main targets. During the period under review, MONUSCO documented 245 cases of human rights violations linked to restrictions of democratic space throughout the country, as compared with 99 such violations in the first two months of 2017. While a general ban on public demonstrations was maintained, pursuant, reportedly, to the instructions of the Minister of the Interior, it was imposed differentially based on political affiliation.

41. MONUSCO documented 148 cases of human rights violations in the three Kasaï provinces, resulting in at least 292 civilian casualties, including 21 women and 63 children, of which 249 killings were reportedly perpetrated by FARDC. There have been continuing reports of massive recruitment of children by the Kamuina Nsapu militia, as well as killings, destruction of property and looting. Those reports also indicate the use of disproportionate force by State agents in the conduct of military operations against the militia. A total of 42 alleged mass graves were identified in the area. MONUSCO transmitted Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates of their presumed locations to military justice, which has yet to initiate an investigation.

42. To date, national authorities have yet to launch investigations related to allegations of serious human rights violations communicated to them by MONUSCO. On 22 May, a modest first step was taken, as represented by a joint mission led by military justice in coordination with MONUSCO in the Nganza commune of Kananga, where MONUSCO had previously documented human rights violations and abuses reportedly perpetrated by law enforcement and security forces. The main objective of the mission was to assess the situation and contribute support to the opening of a military judicial investigation. One of the only trials related to developments in the Kasaï provinces was held from 16 to 19 May, in Bilomba, Kazumba territory, Kasaï Central, where the Kananga military court held a mobile hearing related to prosecution of 10 FARDC soldiers from the 2101 regiment and two national police officers accused of robbery, fraudulent concealment and violation of instructions. While one national police agent was acquitted by the court, the other defendants were convicted and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 45 days to seven years. Also during this period, in Mbuji-Mayi, the military court of Kasaï Oriental commenced the trial of nine FARDC soldiers on charges of having committed war crimes in Mwanza Lomba.

43. On 9 June, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called upon the Human Rights Council to launch an international investigation into the grave human rights violations and abuses that had been perpetrated in Kasaï Central and Kasaï Oriental provinces, noting that their nature and scale, as well as the consistently inadequate responses of the domestic authorities, had obliged him to call for an international investigation as a complement to national efforts. On 23 June, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution in which the Council requested the High Commissioner to appoint a team of international experts to investigate these allegations, in cooperation with the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

44. A total of 178 people are being detained at the Kananga central prison for their alleged affiliation to Kamuina Nsapu militias. Among them are 152 civilians, including one woman, 25 national police agents and one FARDC soldier. Further, 18 civilians, including 10 women and two national police agents, also arrested for their alleged affiliation with the militia, were reportedly released.

45. There continued to be strict adherence to the human rights due diligence policy with regard to all support provided by MONUSCO to Congolese security and defence forces.

**Sexual violence**

46. Seventy-five adults were reported to have been victims of conflict-related sexual violence, including one man, during the period under review, which represented a decrease compared with the first two months of 2017, during which at least 111 women and girls had been victims of such violence. Armed groups were responsible for 72 per cent of those incidents, while State agents were responsible for 28 per cent. During the period under review, Twa militia members (responsible, with 17 victims, for 23 per cent of violations) were the main perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. Among State actors, members of FARDC remained the main perpetrator, with 17 per cent of violations attributable to them. Other perpetrators included FRPI combatants (20 per cent) and various Mayi-Mayi groups (10 per cent). Most of the cases were registered in North Kivu and Tanganyika provinces ((39 per cent and more than 25 per cent, respectively).

**Child protection**

47. During the reporting period, MONUSCO documented 527 cases of grave violations of child rights. At least 269 children were separated or escaped from armed groups, including 14 girls. The main armed groups that recruited and used children were Kamuina Nsapu, Raia Mutomboki, Nyatura, FRPI and Union des patriotes pour la libération du Congo (UPLC).

48. In the Kasaï provinces, militia groups, including Kamuina Nsapu, have systematically recruited and used children in combat against FARDC. MONUSCO documented 28 new cases of child recruitment by Kamuina Nsapu militia, including eight girls, over the reporting period. MONUSCO also documented the killing of at least 59 children, including 25 girls, and the maiming of 44, including four girls, amidst the violence perpetrated since March. In addition, eight girls were subjected to sexual violence: in two cases, the perpetrators were members of armed groups and in six, the perpetrators were State agents. Since September 2016, MONUSCO has documented 646 attacks on schools in the Kasaï provinces by Kamuina Nsapu militia. FARDC used four schools for military purposes; but the schools were vacated following advocacy by MONUSCO. In addition, in Kananga, MONUSCO advocated (with FARDC) the designation of focal points for child protection and (with the military prosecutor) the bringing of perpetrators of grave child rights violations to justice. Following these efforts, MONUSCO screened and secured the release from detention of over 100 children, including one girl.

## D. Humanitarian and economic situations

49. The humanitarian situation in the Kasaï region deteriorated significantly during the period owing to intensifying clashes between FARDC and the Kamuina Nsapu militia. A total of 1.3 million people were internally displaced as of early June, representing a 26 per cent increase in the course of month. On 25 April, humanitarian actors launched a flash appeal for $64.5 million to enable a response to the most pressing needs of some 731,000 extremely vulnerable people during the following six months. The number of Congolese refugees entering Angola in their flight from the violence in the Kasaï provinces had reached some 30,000 people by mid-June, with new refugees arriving daily. As of early June, there were 467,473 refugees in the country, mostly from Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan. By mid-June, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had registered 77,356 South Sudanese refugees, with the majority settled close to the border with South Sudan in the Dungu and Faradje territories, Haut-Uélé province.

50. Insecurity continues to hamper humanitarian access in parts of Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Kasaï, Kasaï Central and Lomami. Funding for aid failed to keep pace with growing humanitarian needs. As at 19 May, the Humanitarian Response Plan was funded at slightly less than 20 per cent ($155 million out of the $812 million needed). In consequence, several non-governmental organizations were compelled to suspend their provision of assistance.

51. On 11 May, national health authorities reported a new outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Likati, Bas-Uélé province, to the World Health Organization. As of mid-June, a total of five confirmed and three probable cases had been reported. Four of the victims survived and four died. MONUSCO and the United Nations system are providing support to the Government, including through the establishment of a logistical support bridge into the remote Likati territory. Preventive measures have been taken to reduce the risk of the spread of the disease across the border with the Central African Republic, from which approximately 7,000 people have fled into the northern Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUSCO also developed its own contingency plans.

52. The macroeconomic trend continued, and amid concerns about low foreign reserves, the Congolese franc has rapidly depreciated, by 17 per cent, since January 2017. The deteriorating socioeconomic situation contributed to the holding of a general strike of civil servants and public companies on 5 April, with moderate participation observed in Kinshasa and some provincial capitals. On 12 April, the International Monetary Fund decided to condition financial support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the stabilization of the political situation. On 16 May, the Prime Minister, Bruno Tshibala, pledged to stabilize the country's economic situation and improve the business climate, develop the agricultural sector, create employment opportunities, especially for women and youth, and improve delivery of social services. On 26 May, the forecast for growth in 2017 of gross domestic product (GDP) was revised downward to 3.5 per cent from the previous figure of 4.9 per cent. On 15 June, the National Assembly adopted the country's budget for 2017-2018 in the amount of $7.9 billion.

## III. Deployment of MONUSCO and implementation of its mandate

53. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution 2348 (2017), MONUSCO has taken steps to reduce the number of its military personnel to 16,215. This objective will be attained with the repatriation, by 31 August, of an infantry battalion of the North Kivu brigade and the additional repatriation of 76 staff officers and military observers. Similarly, in line with the request of the Council, there is a continuation of efforts to transform the MONUSCO Force. The Mission's second rapidly deployable battalion became operational during the reporting period, allowing the Force in North Kivu to minimize its static footprint and increase its agility and responsiveness. In addition, MONUSCO is actively pursuing the deployment of a military threat assessment unit, which will provide significantly improved information and situational awareness. Efforts to increase the Mission's formed police units through inter-mission cooperation, as requested by the Council, are ongoing. Issues regarding the specific conditions under which such an increase could be achieved are being examined before a formal request for support is submitted to the Council. Further adjustments of the military and civilian components of MONUSCO will be undertaken during the strategic review requested by the Council, which would pave the way for the phased and progressive exit of the Mission.

54. MONUSCO continued to prepare for and proactively address risks linked to the electoral process. Contingency plans, including at field office level, remain in place. The Mission continues to maintain three military companies and two formed police units in Kinshasa in order to provide a patrolling capacity and contribute to the protection of civilians and United Nations staff, as well as premises. Moreover, with the arrival of two rapidly deployable companies in Kananga, Kasaï Central, the Uruguay battalion, which constitutes the Force reserve and which was deployed to the area temporarily, has been relieved by a Pakistan battalion. As a result, the Force reserve in Goma has now been reconstituted so as to allow for future redeployment to areas of emerging threats. The MONUSCO police component continues to provide training to the national police on public order management and respect for human rights. It is also developing plans for the training of key units of the national police, including the Légion nationale d'intervention and the Groupe mobile d'intervention, which could contribute significantly to electoral security, the protection of civilians and respect for human rights and political space.

55. The Mission continued its efforts to reinforce the capacity of its partners to promote and protect fundamental freedoms and monitor human rights violations and restrictions on political space. Since March, MONUSCO has organized or participated in at least 53 capacity-building activities for more than 2,000 persons, mainly civil society activists, journalists, politico-administrative authorities, national police officers and political actors, throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

## IV. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

56. MONUSCO continued to implement strong prevention actions, including training programmes for personnel, risk assessments of bases and camps, military police deterrent patrols, and enforcement of strict curfew and out-of-bounds regimes. The Mission is establishing further community-based complaint mechanisms to improve its prevention and enforcement capacities, notably in locations at a pronounced risk for sexual exploitation and abuse. Twelve allegations of perpetration of acts of sexual exploitation and abuse were recorded during the reporting period. Efforts are ongoing to broaden assistance and support to victims, including through engagement with national authorities and organizations.

## V. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

57. In addition to the killing of Michael Sharp and Zaida Catalán, our two colleagues of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some 142 security and safety-related incidents affecting 13 female and 63 male United Nations personnel were reported, compared with75 in the previous reporting period. These included 59 criminal incidents involving the targeting of both national and international personnel, 16 cases linked to civil unrest, 58 hazard-related cases and nine incidents related to armed conflict. The heightened political tensions and MONUSCO support to FARDC operations against armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo could lead to threats to United Nations personnel and installations.

## VI. Observations

58. Six months ago, when Mr. Kabila's second and final term came to an end, the signing by all key Congolese stakeholders of the 31 December 2016 agreement helped to avert a potentially serious crisis. Beyond that initial and positive step,

however, months of follow-up discussions among political actors have delivered neither the speedy implementation of the agreement the Congolese people had hoped for, nor the all-inclusive transitional arrangements they had the right to expect. In addition, a new Government has been inaugurated without the participation of the Rassemblement opposition platform, which was among the main signatories of the agreement. As violence worsens in the once peaceful western part of the country, while long-standing instability remains in areas of the eastern part, I am increasingly concerned that the volatility associated with this combination of political hurdles and security threats in the midst of a difficult economic situation could derail the plans to hold elections in six months. This possibility, in turn, would put the entire political transition at risk, fuelling discontent, frustration and possibly violence. Unless political actors demonstrate renewed good faith and political will to deliver on the promises they made to their people on New Year's Eve, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is set to enter yet another highly uncertain and potentially precarious period.

59. Halfway through the transition period, which began on 1 January, I once again strongly urge all stakeholders to adopt — as they have agreed to do — a collaborative and consensual approach to the full implementation of the agreement, with the aim of holding free, fair, peaceful and credible elections by December 2017. This entails intensifying efforts to ensure the inclusivity of all signatories of the agreement in respect of its implementation, and especially in the process leading to the appointment of the Chair of the National Council for Overseeing the Electoral Agreement and Process. However, dialogue among political actors must not become an end in itself but rather a means for translating the agreements reached into concrete and meaningful actions aimed at delivering peace and stability for the country.

60. I further call upon partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to continue to support genuine efforts by national stakeholders towards achieving the full implementation of the Agreement. I reiterate my call to countries that four years ago signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to work towards the goal of achieving durable peace and stability across their region. I urge international partners, including members of the Security Council, to remain united and committed in sending clear messages on the need for the expeditious implementation of the 31 December agreement and the holding of elections. While preserving the stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is first and foremost the responsibility of its leaders and people, the international community should continue play an active role as well.

61. I commend the Independent National Electoral Commission for the progress made, with the active support of MONUSCO and other partners, in respect of the voter registration process. The registration so far of over half of the eligible voters is a welcome development. These efforts must continue and the process must remain on track, including through ensuring that no eligible voters are disenfranchised through an incomplete process, notably in the Kasaï Central and Kasaï provinces where the process has not yet commenced. I further encourage the Commission to issue the long-awaited electoral calendar, which would provide clarity on the steps ahead and allow partners, including the United Nations, to better determine the type of support they need to provide. I strongly encourage the Congolese authorities to fully implement without further delay the confidence-building measures agreed upon months ago. These will contribute greatly to the establishment of conditions conducive to the holding of credible and peaceful elections. I take note of the authorities' repeated commitment over the past months to funding the upcoming electoral cycle, which it is estimated by the Commission will cost $1.3 billion. Despite the budgetary difficulties facing the Government, it remains crucial that the

promised funds be disbursed as scheduled so as to ensure that the electoral process proceeds as planned. Along the same lines, I call upon external partners to provide the technical and financial support for the holding of these important elections.

62. I remain seriously concerned by the spread of insecurity in the western Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly across the Kasaï region, and the persisting instability across numerous areas of the eastern part of the country. This new landscape of instability poses serious threats to a growing number of civilians. Many are once again being forced into a situation of displacement, including in areas that had experienced a measure of stability in recent years. The spreading violence continues to stretch the operational capacity of national security and defence forces, notably in areas where challenges to State authority have been rapidly increasing. I call upon all actors involved in the continuing violence to lay down their arms and find a peaceful solution to the crisis.

63. I am deeply troubled by the continued increase in human rights violations, including reports that 42 alleged mass graves have been identified in the Kasaï provinces, coupled with a lack of progress in combating impunity. The situation is such that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has called for the establishment of an independent international investigation on the human rights situation in the Kasaï provinces. The Government is bound by the international human rights and humanitarian treaties and norms that it has adhered to voluntary, including those related to the conduct of military operations against armed groups. It must hold its security forces to the highest standards in this regard. I strongly condemn attacks by the Kamuina Nsapu militia against civilians, electoral workers, government institutions, traditional authorities and security forces. I am concerned by the lack of tangible progress regarding the investigations into the alleged grave violations of human rights in the Kasaï provinces involving members of the security forces as well as the Kamuina Nsapu militia. I call upon the Congolese authorities to act with swiftness in regard to conducting investigations and judicial proceedings so as to bring the perpetrators of human rights violations to justice and combat impunity. There can be no sustainable solution to violence without accountability.

64. On 12 March, amid the deteriorating situation in Kasaï Central, the United Nations lost two of its own, Zaida Catalán and Michael Sharp, our colleagues of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Zaida and Michael were killed while seeking to deepen our common knowledge of the tragedy unfolding in that region and across the country. Their aim was to help bring peace to its people. My thoughts and those of the entire United Nations family go out to their families and loved ones. I urge the Congolese authorities to complete a thorough and credible investigation into their killing, and to bring to justice all those who share responsibility for this crime. I am determined to do the utmost in this regard. Already, in line with the Organization's policies, a Board of Inquiry is currently investigating the circumstances of the killing of our colleagues.

65. MONUSCO has made progress in adjusting its priorities and posture with respect to supporting the implementation of the 31 December 2016 political agreement and improving its response to existing and emerging security challenges. The strategic review requested by the Security Council will provide MONUSCO with further recommendations, including on how to adapt the Mission's mandate to specific needs in the post-elections phase. With a strong focus on the political process, MONUSCO, in coordination with the United Nations country team and the international community, will continue to support the implementation of the agreement, which still charts the clearest path towards both the holding of elections and stability. My Special Representative, supported by my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, will continue through his good offices to garner national,

regional and international support for the advance towards credible, inclusive and peaceful elections in the shortest time frame possible.

66. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my Special Representative, Maman Sambo Sidikou, for his tireless efforts in support of the achievement of peace and stability in the country. I pay tribute to the women and men of MONUSCO, the United Nations country team and troop- and police-contributing countries for their dedicated service in often difficult conditions. Their dedication and sacrifice are crucial in helping to make a difference for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am also grateful to my Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, Saïd Djinnit, for his role in the subregion with respect to supporting the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My appreciation is also extended to the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the European Union, as well as other international and regional partners, including donors, and non-governmental organizations, for their invaluable support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

MONUSCO
June 2017
MONUSCO Headquarters
Force Forward Headquarters
Brigade Headquarters
Sector Headquarters
Formed Police Unit
Logistics base
Military Sector boundary
International boundary
Provincial boundary
National capital
0 100 200 300 km
0 100 200 mi
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
SOUTH SUDAN
UGANDA
RWANDA
BURUNDI
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
ZAMBIA
ANGOLA
MALAWI
CONGO
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Bangui
Kinshasa
Brazzaville
Kampala
Kigali
Bujumbura
Goma
Bukavu
Kisangani
Lubumbashi
Kolwezi
Kananga
Mbuji-Mayi
Kindu
Bunia
Beni
Uvira
Boma
Matadi
Mbanza Congo
Bandundu
Inongo
Mbandaka
Gemena
Buta
Isiro
Dungu
Bangassou
Mobaye
Gbadolite
Lisala
Bumba
Basoko
Boende
Lodja
Lusambo
Kabinda
Bondeko
Kalemie
Moba
Manono
Kamina
Kipanga
Kamina
Bukama
Musshira
Dilolo
Mushasha
Lasai
Solwezi
Sakania
Ndola
Mwinilunga
Zilo
Pweto
Kasongo
Kasongo-Lunda
Tshikapa
Luiza
Luebo
Ilebo
Mweka
Lodja
Dekese
Lokandu
Ubundu
Opala
Ikela
Punia
Lubutu
Shabunda
Walikale
Masisi
Rutshuru
Mugogo
Kitchanga
Mushaki
Libenge
Mbaiki
Impfondo
Lukolela
Ingende
Bokungu
Basankusu
Bongandanga
Lusaka
Kasama
Mpika
Chipata
Nakonde
Mbeya
Songea
Tunduma
Kasama
Mansa
Kabwe
Ndola
Kitwe
Chingola
Solwezi
Zambezi
Mwinilunga
Kalene Hill
Lumbala
Nguimbo
Cazombo
Luau
Dilolo
Kolwezi
Likasi
Lubumbashi
Kipushi
Sakania